



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEXICAN MAFIA MEMBER PLEADS GUILTY IN FEDERAL COURT

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced today that 49-year-old Daniel Leza (a.k.a. "Gumby"), Vice President of the Mexican Mafia in San Antonio, pled guilty this morning to one count each of conspiracy to distribute heroin and cocaine and conspiracy to commit money laundering. As a result of his guilty plea, Leza faces between 20 and 25 years in federal prison.

Appearing before U.S. Magistrate Judge John Primomo, Leza admitted that for five years beginning in August 1999, he conspired with others to: 1) obtain large amounts of heroin and cocaine for further distribution and sale; 2) control the distribution of heroin and cocaine by restricting drug trafficking among non-Texas Mexican Mafia members to those who paid extortion fees or a "tax;" 3) protect "authorized" drug distributors from robbery, violence and competition; and, 4) using violence in all forms and degrees to enforce the Texas Mexican Mafia drug distribution "tax." During the time of the conspiracy, authorities estimate that the organization was responsible for distributing over 150 kilograms of cocaine and over 30 kilograms of heroin. During the investigation, authorities also seized approximately 80 firearms and approximately \$50,000 in cash.

Leza is the second defendant in this case to enter a guilty plea. On September 3, 2004, Steve Herrera pled guilty to one count of possession with intent to distribute more than five hundred grams of cocaine. As a result, he faces up to 20 years in federal prison and a maximum \$1 million fine. Jury selection and trial for the remaining 25 defendants is scheduled for October 25, 2004, before United States District Judge Orlando Garcia.

This Organized Crime/Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) case resulted from a year-long investigation conducted by the Drug Enforcement Administration Task Force and the Bexar County Sheriff's Department with assistance from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The DEA Task Force is comprised of law enforcement officers from the Alamo Area Narcotics Task Force, San Antonio Police Department, Comal County Sheriff's Office, Guadalupe County Sheriff's Office, Kerr County Sheriff's Office, Kerrville Task Force, Leon Valley Police Department, New Braunfels Police Department, Schertz Police Department, Seguin Police Department and the Bexar County District Attorney's Office. Assistant United States Attorney Joey Contreras and Joe Sepeda are prosecuting this case on behalf of the Government.

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